



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **District Man Sentenced to 22 Years in Prison for Armed Home Invasion**

**Washington, D.C.** – Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips announced today that a 36-year-old District man, Arturo Gray, was sentenced on June 3, 2009, to 22 years in prison for committing an armed home invasion on January 15, 2008, in the Barnaby Terrace neighborhood in Southeast, Washington, D.C. On January 30, 2009, after a four-day trial, a D.C. Superior Court jury found Gray guilty of thirty-six offenses, including first degree burglary while armed, armed kidnaping, armed robbery, and possession of a firearm during a crime of violence. The Honorable Ronna L. Beck imposed sentence earlier this week.

At trial, the government's evidence established that in the early afternoon of January 15, 2008, Gray and an accomplice, who were wearing dark clothing and ski masks, snuck up on Colton Westbrook as he was entering his home. Gray had a loaded 9mm handgun and his accomplice had what appeared to be a Tech-9 semi-automatic handgun. The men pointed their guns at Westbrook and forced him inside, where they made him lay on the livingroom floor and started demanding money. Gray then rifled through Westbrook's pockets and took over \$100.

After a short time, Gray went up to the second floor of the home and found Westbrook's step-son and his friend asleep in a bedroom. Still wearing his ski-mask, Gray barged into the room, waving his handgun. The friend was so frightened that he lost consciousness and collapsed. When he came to moments later, Gray took both young men downstairs and made them lay face down on the floor with Westbrook. Gray then pistol-whipped Westbrook for not telling him that the two young men were home, causing a severe laceration on his head. Fearing for their lives, the three victims remained on the floor as Gray and his accomplice continued to demand additional money.

Unbeknownst to them all, a neighbor saw Gray forcing Westbrook into his house and called the police. Officers of the Metropolitan Police Department arrived a few minutes later, knocked on the front door, and announced themselves, causing Gray and his accomplice to panic. They ripped off their masks and demanded that Westbrook unlock the back door and let them out. It took a few moments for Westbrook to gain his composure and fit the key in the door, during which time Gray ran upstairs to find another way out. His accomplice, however, stayed downstairs and escaped out the back before officers could catch him.

Meanwhile, Gray kicked out a window screen on the second floor and jumped onto a nearby tree. By that time, Officer Ralph Warren had rounded the back of the home and saw Gray, who then jumped into the fenced-in backyard of a neighboring home. Gray continued to jump fence after fence until he got to a street, where Officer Warren was waiting for him, and caught him within seconds. Recovered inside Gray's pockets was Westbrook's money, and at the base of the tree Gray had climbed down was his 9mm handgun.

In announcing the sentence, Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips commended the work of MPD Detective James V. Francis, Seventh District MPD Officers Marion Anderson, Alfred Myers, Bertha Rice-Riley, Crystal Venable-Griffin, Ralph Warren, and Todd Williams, and MPD Crime Scene Technician Edward Wise. He also praised the work of U.S. Attorney's Office Paralegal Richard Cheatham. Finally, he thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney ("AUSA") Courtney D. Spivey and former AUSA Charles Neil Floyd for investigating and indicting the case, and AUSA Sean P. Tonolli for returning a superceding indictment and trying the case.

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